

~~Gov Doc~~
~~Can~~
~~Comm~~
~~2~~

Canada. Privileges and Elections.
Standing Committee on, 1955

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Second Session—Twenty-second Parliament
1955

Government
Publications

CA1
XC19
-P85

STANDING COMMITTEE

ON

PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS

Chairman: G. Roy McWILLIAM, Esq.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AND EVIDENCE

LIBRARY

No. 4

MAR 31 1955

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 1955

CANADA ELECTIONS ACT

WITNESSES:

Nelson J. Castonguay, Chief Electoral Officer;
Mr. M. H. Wershof, Legal Adviser, Department of External Affairs;
Brigadier J. W. Lawson, Judge Advocate General, Department of National
Defence.

EDMOND CLOUTIER, C.M.G., O.A., D.S.P.
QUEEN'S PRINTER AND CONTROLLER OF STATIONERY
OTTAWA, 1955.

STANDING COMMITTEE
ON
PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS

Chairman: G. Roy McWilliam, Esq., and
Messrs.

Bourque

Bryson

Cardin

Carter

Cavers

Churchill

Dechêne

Dickey

Ellis

Fraser (*Peterborough*)

Members, 29.

Hansell

Harrison

Hollingworth

Leboe

Lefrançois

MacDougall

MacKenzie

McWilliam

Meunier

Nowlan

Pallett

Perron

Pouliot

Richard (*Ottawa East*)

Robinson (*Bruce*)

Viau

Vincent

White (*Waterloo South*)

Zaplitny

Quorum, 10.

Antoine Chassé,
Clerk of the Committee.

ORDERS OF REFERENCE

TUESDAY, March 15, 1955.

Ordered,—That the name of Mr. Fraser (*Peterborough*), be substituted for that of Mr. Murphy (*Lambton West*) on the said Committee.

WEDNESDAY, March 16, 1955.

Ordered,—That the name of Mr. Perron be substituted for that of Mr. Balcer on the said Committee.

Attest.

LEON J. RAYMOND,
Clerk of the House.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

House of Commons, Room 497
THURSDAY, March 17, 1955.

The Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections met at 10.30 o'clock a.m. The Chairman, Mr. G. Roy McWilliam, presided.

Members present: Messrs. Bourque, Bryson, Cardin, Carter, Cavers, Churchill, Dechêne, Dickey, Ellis, Fraser (*Peterborough*), Hansell, Harrison, Hollingworth, Leboe, Lefrancois, MacDougall, McWilliam, Meunier, Pallett, Perron, Pouliot, Richard (*Ottawa East*), Robinson (*Bruce*), Viau, White (*Waterloo South*), and Zaplitny.

In attendance: Mr. Nelson J. Castonguay, Chief Electoral Officer; Mr. E. A. Anglin, Q.C., Assistant Chief Electoral Officer; Mr. M. H. Wershof, Legal Adviser, Mr. Giles Sicotte, Chief of the Legal Division, and Mr. C. M. Bedard, representing the Department of External Affairs; Brigadier W. J. Lawson, Judge Advocate General and Captain J. P. Dewis, R.C.N., Deputy Judge Advocate General, representing the Department of National Defence.

Mr. M. H. Wershof was called.

The witness, gave an outline of the proposal to afford Canadians who are members of the public service and residing abroad facilities to allow them to exercise their franchise, and he was questioned thereon at length.

He filed with the Committee a statement showing the number, in each department, to which application of the proposal will apply and it was ordered that the said statement be appended to this day's printed report of Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence. (*See Appendix "A"*).

The Chairman thanked Mr. Wershof for his very instructive testimony and the witness was retired.

Brigadier W. J. Lawson, Judge Advocate General, was called.

The witness addressed the Committee briefly and was questioned on the proposal of the Department of National Defence to extend the existing provisions of the Canadian Forces Voting Regulations, contained in Schedule Three to the Canada Elections Act, to the wives of members of the armed forces.

Brigadier Lawson was thanked by the Chairman and was retired.

Mr. Nelson J. Castonguay was recalled.

Mr. Castonguay was questioned at length as to the issues which might be involved by the implementation of the proposals made by the Department of External Affairs and the Department of National Defence.

After some debate Mr. Pouliot moved that consideration of the proposals, herein above referred to, be postponed indefinitely.

And the question having been put on the motion of Mr. Pouliot, it was, on a show of hands, resolved in the negative.

Mr. MacDougall moved that the Committee approve in principle the extension of the provisions of the Canadian Forces Voting Regulations to wives of servicemen living abroad.

It being 12.30 o'clock p.m., the Committee adjourned to the call of the Chair.

Antoine Chassé,
Clerk of the Committee.

EVIDENCE

March 17, 1955.
10.30 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, we have a quorum, and we will proceed.

Mr. RICHARD (*Ottawa East*): I understood that we would proceed this morning with the discussion on the possible extension of the franchise to public servants living abroad. I understand from the steering committee that we have the pleasure of having with us this morning a representative from the Department of External Affairs, Mr. Wershof. I was wondering whether it would not be better, before we have the opportunity of putting questions, to obtain some sort of a direct statement from an official like Mr. Wershof, who is the legal officer of the Department of External Affairs, to explain what position his department takes and what information it has on this subject. I would therefore move that we ask Mr. Wershof to make a preliminary statement.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that agreed?

Agreed.

Mr. M. H. Wershof, Legal Adviser, Department of External Affairs, called:

The CHAIRMAN: Do you have a prepared statement?

The WITNESS: No, sir, but I should like to speak from these notes.

The CHAIRMAN: I think that that would be agreeable with the committee. Mr. Wershof, you may proceed.

The WITNESS: If I may, I shall just take a few minutes with general remarks, and then I shall be at your disposal to answer any questions. I also have some statistics on the number of people all over the world who might be affected by this idea of Mr. Richard. In our department, with the approval of Mr. Pearson, we have been studying for some time the possibility that somebody might recommend to this committee that the Canada Elections Act be amended to make it possible for Canadian government civilian employees outside of Canada to vote in general elections, and, if that were found possible, perhaps their wives also, because there are a large number of wives of Canadian government civilian employees abroad. From time to time we have had patriotic complaints from some of our foreign service officers particularly, because of the fact that they are not able to vote. Over a period of years they have been urging our department to bring the problem to the attention of the appropriate authorities. Therefore we are very grateful for a chance to say a few words to this committee.

As you gentlemen know, under the Canada Elections Act there are at the present time two categories of persons outside of Canada who are able to vote in elections, the first being the Canadian forces electors, under the Canadian Forces Voting Regulations, which is Schedule Three of the Act, and the second, prisoners of war. The principle of allowing the serviceman abroad to vote was, I believe, first recognized in 1940 by an order in council; then it was put into the statute in 1944 and reenacted in 1951. To our department it seems that the decision by parliament to make it possible for Canadian servicemen outside of Canada to vote really emphasized the desirability, in principle at least, of trying to extend the vote to other people in the Canadian

government public service who are required to be outside of Canada, not from their own choice but because their official duties take them outside of Canada. Our department, I think, has the largest number of employees outside of Canada, and for that reason we naturally have taken more interest in this than some other departments, but we have in fact discussed it on the official level with various other departments. Later, if you wish, I will give detailed figures, or I can leave them with the committee. However, we think that the number of Canadian government employees abroad and their wives, who might conceivably be covered by any legislation, would be in round figures about 1,400 people, of whom about 620 would be from the Department of External Affairs.

By Mr. Pouliot:

Q. If I am permitted, I should like to ask this. Did you study law?—A. Yes.

Q. Do you realize that there is a great difference between a vote cast by a Canadian citizen or a British subject living in Canada and a vote cast outside of Canada, for a Canadian election?—A. Yes, sir, I certainly realize that there is a great difference.

Q. Yes, a difference in law. It is this, that in the first place the Canadian citizen or British subject living in Canada has a right to vote, by virtue of the general law. Then the members of the armed forces who live outside of Canada have been given the privilege of voting because normally they would not have the right to vote in Canadian elections. Do you agree with that?—A. Yes, sir, certainly.

Q. Then the right to vote which has been given, first by order in council and then by the parliament of Canada, to the branches of the armed forces outside of Canada was given as a privilege. You will agree with that?—A. Yes, it was a decision of parliament.

Q. A privilege given to the armed forces and to the wives of the members of the forces. Will you also agree that the granting of the privilege does not constitute a precedent?—A. Well, Mr. Chairman, if you will allow me, I cannot answer that question with a straight "Yes" or "No". I say this with all respect to the hon. member. What we are doing, with Mr. Pearson's permission, is simply to submit the problem to this committee for consideration, leaving it, of course, to the hon. members of this committee to decide whether there are good and sufficient reasons to recommend to parliament that amendments be made to the Act to make it possible for Canadian government officials abroad to vote. But I shall say, if I may, that in the opinion of our department—and I know that Mr. Pearson holds the same opinion—the same principle which caused parliament to decide to make it possible for Canadian armed forces personnel outside of Canada to vote in peacetime could be considered suitable, in our respectful opinion, for Canadian government civilian employees who are sent out of Canada to work in various countries for temporary periods. Unfortunately, in most cases they are outside of Canada when the elections take place.

Q. That is right, but you are just considering that the privilege granted to the forces should be extended to the Department of External Affairs, and in that regard I ask you if, to your knowledge, the granting of the privilege has ever constituted a precedent. Do you use it as a precedent?—A. Yes, sir, I do.

Q. Well, I ask you whether in law the granting of the privilege constitutes a right or constitutes a precedent?—A. Mr. Chairman, we are not suggesting that there is any right on the part of members of the Department of External Affairs or any other government department to ask parliament or to ask this committee to recommend to parliament that this be done. But, with all

respect, we think that it is perfectly reasonable to point to the action that parliament took in connection with the armed forces as a precedent, not in the sense of a legally binding precedent but in the sense of an example of a decision by parliament, to make it possible for a very important group of Canadians who are outside of Canada to cast their votes. All we are saying, with Mr. Pearson's approval, is that, if parliament thought it wise to grant the privilege to members of the armed forces stationed abroad, possibly this committee might, after consideration, deem it wise to do something along the same lines for Canadian government civilian employees. That is as far as I would go. I am not talking in terms of a legal precedent binding on this committee or anybody else.

Q. You are very clever. You use the word "example" instead of "precedent". Now I should like to ask you about something else. How long have you been working on that?—A. On this subject?

Q. Yes.—A. I would say about a year.

Q. Now, are you in a position to tell us — speaking of precedents — what other country gives the right of voting to civilians outside of their country?—A. I have some information on that, Mr. Chairman. It is not exhaustive. We have not made inquiries in every country in the world, but, if I may, I will read briefly the information that we have.

Q. Please do.—A. In the United Kingdom we understand that a system of voting by proxy is available not only to members of the armed forces but also to civil servants and their wives stationed outside the United Kingdom. That is the first example.

Q. For United Kingdom civil servants all over the world?—A. Yes, sir, in principle, all over the world. I have not looked into it to see whether they have been able to include every civil servant, even to the farthest regions of the jungle, but in principle their law provides for all civil servants all over the world.

Q. Did you ask the British High Commissioner in Ottawa if he was empowered to vote in the British elections?—A. Sir, what we did was to look into their law. We did not make an official approach to the British government. We looked into the law. As a matter of curiosity, I spoke to a member of the High Commissioner's staff this morning to see whether the law in fact works in that way, and the man to whom I spoke said, "Yes, it did". He said that in the last elections he was stationed in Rome, and he remembers casting a vote by proxy under United Kingdom legislation in London.

Q. How do they vote by proxy?—A. I am sorry, but I have not looked into the details of the system. If the committee desired, we would be very glad to prepare a report on it. I did not come this morning with full information regarding the British system.

Mr. POULIOT: Here we have a man who has been working for a year on this, and he is not in a position to answer our questions. It is always the same thing. These witnesses came here in the name of Mr. Pearson, and they know nothing. They came here as experts to inform us, and they know nothing.

Mr. RICHARD (*Ottawa East*): Mr. Chairman, I protest.

The CHAIRMAN: I think that we should let the witness proceed and finish his statement, and we can discuss it afterwards. These questions can be asked after he finishes. I do not think that the witness can be held as to the mechanics of the law in any case. He has just asked this committee to consider extending the franchise to civil servants outside of Canada. Will you proceed now, Mr. Wershof, with any other remarks you have to make?

The WITNESS: My general remarks are practically finished. I had mentioned the approximate number of people. Although it is not for us to say what mechanics would be proper, I imagine that if this committee thinks that there is merit in the idea, you would be asking the Chief Electoral Officer to give you advice on what mechanics might be suitable. Nevertheless, we looked into it to see how it possibly might be done if this committee of parliament thought it wise. This is the method which we thought might make sense, if the committee and parliament wanted to amend Schedule Three of the Act, which at present deals with the armed forces. It would require rather extensive amendments in order to cover Canadian civilian employees abroad. Although it is not possible for us to decide these matters, we thought that in practice parliament and others concerned might not wish to try actually to give the vote to Canadian government employees everywhere in the world, because it might be found that a quite unreasonable expense would have to be undertaken, for the sake of a small number of people. What we thought was this: in the last election the Chief Electoral Officer, under the provisions of the law, set up a special voting territory for servicemen with headquarters in London, England, and he had a special returning officer with a staff to take the vote from servicemen all over Europe. Our thought was that, if parliament so desired, it would be feasible for Canadian government employees and possibly their wives, certainly in all of Europe, to be looked after by the machinery which in any event the Chief Electoral Officer is already authorized to set up under the Act for the armed forces. Of course, the machinery in London would not be able to look after Canadian government employees, let us say, in Latin America or in Indonesia. In the last election, the Chief Electoral Officer set up similar machinery in Japan to look after the forces in Korea. It may turn out that there will not be such machinery in the next election because the number of forces in Korea is diminishing, but in any event we are not suggesting—and it would not be our place to suggest—that this committee or parliament should decide to set up new voting territories in various parts of the world at great expense for the benefit of a relatively small number of employees. However, we think that the principle is worthy of consideration, and if the committee and parliament approve the principle, then in practice perhaps only the employees in Europe would be able to vote, at least at the next election, because we know that there will be machinery in London, England, set up for the armed forces, which in our opinion would be quite capable of looking after government employees, at least in the whole of Europe.

Finally, I might read out a very brief summary of the figures, and then leave with the committee, if you wish, a long table which we have prepared including information about other departments. Although I am not authorized to speak for the other departments, we did our best to obtain figures from other departments to show where their people are in other parts of the world. If I might, I shall leave the long table with the committee, and I could read the short one.

As far as we can see, this is the setup. In Europe and the Middle East there are about 478 Canadian government civilian employees. If you include their wives, it makes 780. That is a fairly sizeable number, which could probably be looked after by the machinery in London, England.

In the United States there are about 193 Canadian government civilian employees, and including the wives the figure is 305. In our opinion, if parliament so provided, those people could easily be allowed to vote by using the armed forces machinery set up in Canada. As you know, there are three voting territories set up in Canada by law for the armed forces and, subject to what Mr. Castonguay says, it seems that people in the United States could easily be authorized by parliament to use that machinery.

In Latin America there are 67 Canadian government civilian employees, or 115 people, including wives. In the Far East and South Africa, there are 100 employees, or 145 people, including wives.

The total for the areas I have mentioned is about 839 employees, or 1,335 people, counting the wives. These figures were drawn up rather hastily, and we think that we have left out a few areas in the world which might add another 25 people, but it gives an idea of the magnitude of the problem. Even if it turned out that it would not make sense from a financial point of view to provide the vote for all of these people, it seemed to us that it would be simple to provide it for the people in Europe, that is 780 voters, and certainly in the United States, where there are 305. With regard to the others, perhaps it would not be possible.

By Mr. Fraser (Peterborough):

Q. May I ask a question? Are you taking into consideration only the federal government employees who are abroad?—A. Yes.

Q. Was any consideration given to including trade commissioners and others from the provinces in foreign countries, because I am afraid that they might feel slighted if they were not included?—A. Of course, we realized that there are a number, but I would not imagine that there are a great proportion of provincial employees abroad. I imagine that most of them would be in the United Kingdom and France. We did not think that it was proper for our department to be expressing any opinion about provincial government employees. Obviously that is a question that this committee might wish to consider. We did think, however, with all respect, that even if it were found not feasible to give it to provincial government employees, if for administrative reasons it did not work out, we respectfully submit that there is a case for extending the franchise to the federal officials abroad in the public service.

Q. In the number that you gave of officials overseas in various countries, did you consider that some of the employees of the government are not Canadian citizens?—A. I am quite satisfied that our figures include only Canadian citizens. There are probably almost a thousand aliens locally engaged, but we did not count them in our figures. These are just British subjects, but presumably if their homes are in Canada they would be eligible to vote in Canada if they were here during the elections.

Mr. DICKEY: I think it would be of interest to the committee if the witness could complete the list of countries that do extend some sort of privilege of this kind to their employees abroad. I do not think we need at this stage to go into the actual details of how they arrange it, but only the information as to countries who do this sort of thing.

The WITNESS: This is probably not an exhaustive list, because we did not explore it all over the world. I had mentioned the United Kingdom. In Australia, where voting is compulsory anyway, we know that there is a postal voting procedure available to registered electors who are absent from their places of residence and abroad on election day. I really do not know, sir, whether in practice an Australian government official who had been abroad for a few years would find it possible to make use of it, but in theory he could. If he were in Australia at a time that would enable him to get on the electoral list, then he could use the postal voting procedure when he is abroad.

In Sweden, we are informed, foreign service personnel may vote by mail in any constituency of their choice in the Stockholm area. In South Africa, we are told, foreign service officers and, I think, all government employees abroad may vote by mail for the constituency where they normally reside.

With regard to the United States, we made inquiries, and the first thing we learned was that the right to vote in federal elections is actually governed by state laws and not federal laws. In the District of Columbia, which is

probably the home of most of the diplomatic officers abroad, as you know, residents do not have the vote, and it follows that a diplomatic officer or any government employee whose normal home is in the District of Columbia has no more right to vote when he is abroad than when he is at home. But if his normal home is outside the District of Columbia, then it varies from state to state. Foreign service personnel with residence qualifications may vote in both primary and general elections in thirty-six states, and they can vote in the general elections in five additional states.

Those are the only countries about which we have reliable information. Perhaps, if the committee desired, we could try to get fuller information, but it might take a few weeks.

By Mr. Zaplitny:

Q. What about the United Kingdom?—A. It is a proxy voting system, not of the kind provided for the Canadian armed forces.

Q. It is the kind we have for prisoners of war?—A. For prisoners of war, but not for the armed forces. We understand that it is available to members of the armed forces, to their civil servants abroad and to their wives.

Mr. DICKEY: I was wondering if the witness could say whether or not persons who are employees of the federal government abroad but not coming directly under the Department of External Affairs were kept in mind in connection with the department's thinking on this; for instance, the civilian school teachers who are abroad in Department of National Defence service schools teaching the children of dependents?

The WITNESS: If I may, I shall answer that in two parts. In our department we most certainly took into account the actual employees of all other government departments. I am not authorized to speak for them, but we did in fact consult other departments and our figures include all their employees, but not the teachers. I know it is a fact that the officials in the other departments, like ourselves, thought this would be a good idea, if the committee of parliament thought it was a good idea. We know as a fact that the Department of National Defence is greatly interested in the teachers as well, but I am afraid that we as a department have nothing to say about the teachers overseas, because we concentrated on the category of the *employees* of the Canadian government and their wives.

Mr. ZAPLITNY: In relation to this estimated number of 839, or 1,335, including wives, as the case may be, has an effort been made to find out how many of those would actually have a vote, provided they were living in one of the Commonwealth countries, in the country in which they are at present employed? For example, if they were British subjects and were living in the United Kingdom for a certain period of time—I think it is one year—they are allowed to vote in that country. How many of those have the vote in a country other than Canada?

The WITNESS: I am afraid that we did not think of that question, but I can give a partial answer. In the United Kingdom, for example, there appear to be about 150—or possibly 200—Canadians employed by the Canadian government. As the hon. member said, I believe that in theory many of these might take steps to vote in the United Kingdom elections. Frankly, sir, we did not look at it from that point of view. We would do nothing to stop a Canadian government employee in the United Kingdom from voting in the United Kingdom elections if he felt like it. But I am reasonably sure that, if any of our employees were to ask us whether we would approve of it, we would tell them that it is not a good idea. These people are Canadian citizens working for the Canadian government, and even though the United Kingdom may generously extend the franchise to any British subject who is physically

living in the United Kingdom for 12 months, I think it would seem to most of us in the External Affairs service that it would not be a good idea. In any event, the Canadian government employees who have complained did so on the basis that they are citizens of Canada, that their homes are in Canada, and that they are doing a public duty by accepting postings outside Canada. Some of our postings are not so attractive as those in the United Kingdom. We therefore feel that, if it were possible, they ought to be able to exercise the franchise like other Canadian citizens whose homes are in Canada.

The CHAIRMAN: That applies to British subjects who are in Canada for more than one year and who belong to an embassy or a high commissioner's office here. They can also vote here.

Mr. CHURCHILL: What is the term of service abroad for employees in the various departments who are posted abroad?

The WITNESS: It varies a great deal even within our own department. Other departments have people who may be stationed abroad for 10 or 15 years, although presumably every three or four years they are eligible to come back to Canada on home leave for a few months. In our own service, the normal term abroad for officers, stenographers and clerks averages about three years. Sometimes a man is sent abroad and at the end of three years he comes back on home leave for a few months and then goes abroad again. It would be unusual in our department for a man to remain abroad continuously for much more than 3½ years. Many of our people spend most of their careers abroad, except for occasional home leaves in Canada and occasional short postings in Ottawa. I have been told of some people in our department who in the course of 25 years' service have never had a chance to get on a voters' list in Canada. Some of them, as patriotic citizens, rather regret that and wish that there was a way for them to vote like other Canadians.

Mr. DICKEY: I wonder if the witness would say that this is regarded as a reasonably important method of keeping a tie between Canada and a number of officers who, through their services, have to live abroad for many years.

The WITNESS: Well, Mr. Chairman, of course, it is a matter of speculation. We have not canvassed other government employees, not even all our own, to ask them how strongly they feel about it. But we have heard from a good many of them on it. I would agree with Mr. Dickey that this would be an important thing, not from the point of view of the number of votes actually added to any constituency, but from the point of view of principle. A good many Canadian employees abroad feel that at this important time in Canadian public life and Canadian democracy, they should be able to vote like other Canadians.

Mr. HANSELL: They would like to see that by being assigned to another country they do not lose their franchise?

The WITNESS: Yes.

By Mr. Pallett:

Q. Did the figure that you gave for the numbers in the United States include people at the United Nations?—A. It includes any people at the United Nations in the employ of the Canadian government, not Canadians working for the United Nations secretariat. There are two kinds of Canadians at the United Nations; some are employed by the United Nations itself, and we have not counted them in.

Q. Do you have any idea of the number involved there?—A. No, sir.

Mr. CAVERS: In giving the franchise to those who are civil servants or employees of the dominion government and not giving the vote to those who may be employed on the secretariat or as commercial or mercantile representatives of various firms in many parts of the world, it seems to me that you are going to create a discrimination between certain classes of employees. I think that that is going to cause a great deal of trouble unless everyone is given the franchise.

The CHAIRMAN: As you know, the witness is speaking on behalf of the Department of External Affairs. I do not know if he would care to elaborate on that, but I do not think, probably, that he should. It is up to other groups to make representations if they so desire.

Mr. RICHARD (*Ottawa East*): I suppose that this matter is now open for discussion. The people we are discussing are servants of the Crown who, on account of their duties as public officials, are posted abroad, not of their own volition but because the government, either provincial or federal, posts them abroad. That is different from a civilian employee who works for a firm.

Mr. CAVERS: They might not be there of their own volition either. They might be sent there.

Mr. RICHARD (*Ottawa East*): You might perhaps say that. But it is in essence coming back to the question of whether a privilege of this type should be extended to any other than those who deserve the privilege. I think that in the first meeting the Chief Electoral Officer explained that it was not possible to give the right of voting to every Canadian citizen wherever he may be. It is desirable, and it is an inherent right, not a privilege, to vote outside of Canada, but on account of the difficulty of the machinery, some cannot be allowed to vote at the present time. That is why that privilege should be extended only where it is reasonable on account of the difficulties involved.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, under our present system.

Mr. MACDOUGALL: I do not wish to be biased in this. I am a great admirer of the personnel of the Department of External Affairs, and I think that they are doing a terrific job, and I know that the witness is doing a great job in that department today. But there are many facets to this discussion. One of them has been raised by Mr. Cavers.

The CHAIRMAN: If I might interrupt at this point, as we are going to hear the witness from the Department of National Defence on the subject of having the franchise extended to Canadians living outside Canada; maybe we had better deal with all the witnesses and the questions, and then if anyone wants to make a general statement afterwards, that would be a better time.

Mr. MACDOUGALL: Are you going to hear the witness from the Department of National Defence today?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. MACDOUGALL: Then I shall sit down.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any more questions?

By Mr. Fraser (Peterborough):

Q. Would the men and women employed under the Colombo Plan as instructors and so on come under this?—A. Of course, we have not presented to this committee an actual scheme of legislation. I think that some of the Colombo Plan employees would be technically employees of the Canadian government. Therefore, so far as we are concerned, they would be covered if the machinery could reach them. But, actually, most of them are in parts of the world where the chances are that the machinery will not reach them anyway.

Q. Yes, but under the Colombo Plan there might be a man coming under the Department of External Affairs and another man working right with him who might not be covered. One would have the vote and the other would not.—A. Our suggestion relates to all employees of the Canadian government abroad.

Q. It would cover the Colombo Plan?—A. If they are on the payroll of the Canadian government they would be covered.

By Mr. Pallett:

Q. Do you have the total number of Canadians abroad?—A. All Canadian citizens?

Q. Yes.—A. No, sir. We do not have a figure that would be of much use. In many countries we have fairly reliable figures, but what ruins it is that in countries like the United States and the United Kingdom there are scores of thousands whom there is no way to identify as Canadians. So many Canadians take up their homes in the United Kingdom and become part of the United Kingdom community; likewise in the United States. I am afraid that we do not have figures. In any event, most of those people have taken up their residences for life in the other countries, whereas we submit that the ones we are talking about are the people whose normal home is in Canada but who are temporarily sent abroad, as in our case, for the good of the country, and in other cases to work for the provincial governments or for corporations.

By Mr. Hansell:

Q. Might I ask this? Would the normal residences of people stationed abroad be fairly scattered, or would you say that they might be concentrated in one or two areas? Would you say that there is a preponderance of them whose residence would be in Ottawa, or would they come from all parts?—A. It would depend on how the law was drafted, whether the individual was asked to say what he regards as his home.

Q. As I understand it, if he voted according to the regulations governing the services vote, he would vote for a candidate in his own particular constituency from which he came.—A. One of the many problems that would arise, if the committee thought that there was some merit in the general idea, is this: in the armed forces a man knows where his home is. If his home is Edmonton and he enlists for five years, or whatever period it is, in the army, his home is still Edmonton. I used to live in Edmonton until about 18 years ago. In some ways I might think of Edmonton as my home. I have brothers and sisters there, but physically my home is in Ottawa, I have a house in Ottawa, and when I am stationed abroad I consider that I live in Ottawa. If the law gave me a choice and said, "You can put down what you regard as your home", maybe I would put down "Edmonton", or I might put down "Ottawa".

Mr. FRASER (*Peterborough*): But the serviceman has a choice.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: The serviceman can only give his ordinary place of residence prior to enrolment. But in December of any year he may change that, provided his residence has been physically changed.

Mr. FRASER (*Peterborough*): That is what I meant.

Mr. DICKEY: If a serviceman moves his family from Edmonton to Ottawa during the year and was intending to come back to Ottawa when his period of service outside the country was over, he could in December of that year make a declaration changing his place of ordinary residence to Ottawa.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Broadly speaking. When the regulations came into force those who were in the forces had approximately three choices. Now, as the regulations have been functioning, these people on enrolment have only one choice. It is their place of residence prior to enrolment.

By Mr. Pouliot:

Q. Mr. Wershof, you spoke of Canadians working on the Colombo Plan outside of Canada. Are there many of those?—A. We think that there must be at least a few dozen at the moment working abroad on the Colombo Plan.

Q. They had not been employed for a long time?—A. Most of them go out on a contract for one year or two years.

Q. At the outset I was told that no Canadians were working on the Colombo Plan. After we had subscribed some money for it—A. Perhaps I did not make myself clear. Under the technical assistance part of the Colombo Plan, there are certain Canadian experts, mostly technical experts, who are from the Canadian government service. I think that some are borrowed from industry. Another government—for example, the government of India—asks the Canadian government if we can let them have an expert to give technical assistance under the Colombo Plan on a certain project. The Canadian government then tries to get an expert, who may be from the Canadian government service or may be from private industry in Canada, and sends him out for two years, for example, to work in India. It is under the Colombo Plan in the sense that it is under the technical assistance part of the Colombo Plan.

Q. This is what you mean?—A. Yes.

Q. Because I was speaking of those engaged in the management of the Colombo Plan outside of Canada. There are no Canadians on that?—A. I think that you are correct. It is only the technical assistance people who are sent out.

Mr. HOLLINGWORTH: Technical assistance people would be employed by certain United Nations agencies, would they not?

The WITNESS: The United Nations certainly has a technical assistance program and they send out people, and for all I know they may send out some Canadians. There are also some Canadians who are sent out under the technical assistance part of the Colombo Plan and who are on the Canadian government payroll, I believe. Presumably they would have as much right to be given consideration as other Canadian government employees.

Mr. CARTER: I can see that the principle is one thing, but the practical application of that principle might be quite another thing. I was wondering if either the witness or the Chief Electoral Officer could give us any information as to how effective this machinery used in other countries is for this purpose. We have heard of voting by proxy, voting by mail and various other methods. If the machinery is not effective, it would be hardly worth while to set it up.

The CHAIRMAN: Today we are discussing the principle of the thing, and I do not know whether we are getting into the mechanics or not. Of course, it may have a bearing on our decision, but I think that we should probably wait and deal with it later. For the time being we will finish with the witness on questions concerning the principle rather than the mechanics.

Mr. RICHARD (*Ottawa East*): I think so, Mr. Chairman. Then we can hear the witness from the Department of National Defence and let the Chief Electoral Officer speak.

Mr. POULIOT: Would this be the right time to move that the suggestion should be postponed indefinitely?

The CHAIRMAN: I think that perhaps we should hear the witness from the Department of National Defence.

Mr. POULIOT: I move that the suggestion made by Mr. Wershof be postponed indefinitely.

Mr. MACDOUGALL: Though I agree in principle 100 per cent with my friend, Mr. Pouliot, I hardly think that this is fair. We have now heard Mr. Wershof of the Department of External Affairs. I understand that the representative from the Department of National Defence is here, and I do not think that we should differentiate on that basis at the moment. I should like to make a motion, too, Mr. Pouliot, along the same lines as you. I think that we ought to hear a representative from the armed services.

The CHAIRMAN: I think that the steering committee agreed to that, and that we call the witnesses this morning. They are here, and, if it is agreed, we will proceed with the other witness, but first, as we have only one reporter this morning, we are going to have a five-minute break before we hear the representative of the Department of National Defence.

Is it the wish of the committee that this table from the Department of External Affairs be printed in the proceedings of the committee?

Agreed. (See Appendix "A")

Mr. Wershof, I should like to thank you very much for coming here this morning and stating your case on behalf of the civil servants of Canada residing outside of Canada in respect to their being granted the franchise. I am sure that the committee will give every consideration to your presentation. Thank you very much for your assistance.

(Upon resuming):

The CHAIRMAN: We will resume after our recess.

Mr. DICKEY: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, the Hon. Mr. Campney, Minister of National Defence, was looking forward to being able to be here at this meeting to present to the members of the committee the thoughts of the Department of National Defence in connection with the problem relating to the taking of the votes of Canadian servicemen stationed overseas in the various services. Under arrangements made by the Department of National Defence, these men have their wives and families with them. As the committee knows, Canadian servicemen are now entitled to vote under the Canada Elections Act. Regulations, known as the Canadian Forces Voting Regulations, are included as a schedule to the Act which sets up the machinery for the taking of the vote of service electors in service polls. Now, there is no need for any substantial changes in the regulations as they apply to members of the regular forces and members of the reserve forces who are on full-time service. However, the situation at present is that a large number of wives and families of Canadian servicemen are now resident abroad, and it is felt that, in view of the fact that the mechanics for taking the votes of the service electors are set up, consideration should be given to the propriety of extending eligibility for voting in those service polls to the wives of these same servicemen. The department has prepared draft amendments to the regulations for submission to the committee at a later stage, if and when the committee decides that the principle should be adopted and that consideration should be given as to the practicability of this proposal. The draft amendments make minor changes in the regulations, but their main purpose is to include provisions which would extend the regulations to cover the wives of servicemen.

Brigadier Lawson, the Judge Advocate General, is here to speak on behalf of the department and particularly at this stage to answer questions of the members of the committee. He is prepared at a later stage to present the draft amendments to which I have referred and to go over them in detail with the committee, but I believe that at this moment it would be more

appropriate perhaps to have Brigadier Lawson answer questions by the members relating to the principle involved.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it agreed that we hear Brigadier Lawson, the Judge Advocate General?

Agreed.

Brigadier W. J. Lawson, Judge Advocate General, Department of National Defence, called:

The WITNESS: Mr. Chairman, I can add very little to what Mr. Dickey has said by way of explanation. There are at the present time some 3,613 wives of Canadian servicemen living abroad with their husbands, largely in Germany with our Canadian brigade and part of our air division, and in France with the remainder of our air division. These servicemen and their wives live on stations or in camps, in married quarters, in what, I think, could properly be referred to as integrated Canadian communities. They have their own shops, their own churches, and live together there just as if they were living in a town in Canada. When a general election occurs, we set up in these communities polling places at which the servicemen are entitled to vote. The proposal is that the wives should also be entitled to vote in these same polling places and under the same terms and conditions as their husbands. The same machinery will be used, and little or no additional expense would appear to be involved in the proposal.

By Mr. Fraser (Peterborough):

Q. May I ask a question? In regard to these 3,613 wives, some of them would be women of foreign birth. Would they automatically become Canadian citizens on marrying a soldier?—A. No, they do not, sir.

Q. I wanted to know how you would work that out in your voting. Has consideration been given to that?—A. I have not specifically considered the problem, Mr. Chairman. I think that they would not have a vote, as they would not be British subjects.

Mr. DICKEY: Mr. Chairman, the situation is that the regulations proposed would extend the franchise to the wives of Canadian service electors. The qualifications for a wife would be that she is of the full age of 21 years, which is the general requirement of the Act, and that she is a Canadian citizen or other British subject. If under the general law she became by her marriage a Canadian citizen and entitled to vote as a Canadian citizen under the general Canada Elections Act, then she would be eligible under these regulations. If by the fact of her marriage she did not become a Canadian citizen or British subject, she would not be covered.

Mr. FRASER (*Peterborough*): It is up to the wife herself whether she wishes to become a Canadian citizen?

Mr. DICKEY: It is as to whether or not she is under the general law a Canadian citizen or a British subject.

Mr. FRASER (*Peterborough*): She has a choice?

Mr. DICKEY: It is a matter of the general law, and I do not think that we should go into that. If in fact under the general law she is a Canadian citizen or a British subject, then she would be covered by the proposed regulations. Otherwise, she would not.

By Mr. Cavers:

Q. Brigadier Lawson has told us that there were 3,613 wives living with their husbands abroad. Can you tell the committee how many wives are not

living abroad with their husbands, but who are residing in Canada? My point is this: what check is going to be made on the voters' lists in Canada to see that a wife does not vote in Canada and then have someone vote for her abroad?—A. Mr. Chairman, in answer to the first part of the question, I have no exact figures of the number of wives who remain in Canada and the number who go abroad, but a high percentage of wives go abroad with their husbands. In answer to the second part of the question: if the wife was abroad and voted abroad, she obviously could not vote in Canada. She would not be physically present in Canada to vote although she might possibly be on a voters' list in Canada if she had not left before the list had been prepared.

Q. Those wives who are not abroad would be entitled to vote in Canada and to vote there.—A. That is right. They would have the normal civilian vote in Canada, just as any other servicemen's wives in Canada.

Mr. DICKEY: Perhaps there is some confusion here. It is a service vote; it is not a vote by proxy. The individual has to mark his ballot and put his ballot in a proper envelope. It is not a question of having somebody else vote for the wife; the wife has to vote personally.

Mr. CAVERS: My point is this: what check is going to be made between the vote taken abroad and the voters' list in Canada to make sure that persons are not voting in somebody else's name?

Mr. DICKEY: Perhaps that is a point that could be discussed by the committee later. Actually that would involve the question of impersonation in Canada, which is dealt with otherwise.

By Mr. Richard (Ottawa East):

Q. The witness mentioned 3,613 wives living in camps. The wives of enlisted men who are living abroad but not in camps would not be covered. Is that right?—A. I did not intend to say that. I said that there are 3,613 wives of servicemen living with their husbands outside of Canada. Most of those are living in camps, but not all.

Q. The next point is this: some of these wives are living in areas where servicemen's votes can be taken, but that would not be covered in all the countries in the world where servicemen are posted with their wives?—A. That is quite right. There would be a few cases where it would not be practicable for the wife to vote, as it is not practicable now for the serviceman to vote. We have military attaches at our embassies in various countries, and it is not practically possible for them to vote, under the regulations as they now exist; neither would it be practically possible for their wives to vote.

Q. The serviceman's vote does not entitle every serviceman in the world to vote, but only those in localities where the facilities are provided. Those facilities are limited in principle, are they not?—A. That is right.

By Mr. Fraser (Peterborough):

Q. Would not military attaches in the different embassies be able to vote under the same regulations as members of the External Affairs staff? They would be attached to the same setup.—A. I would assume, Mr. Chairman, that if it is decided to extend the vote to Canadian civilian employees abroad, arrangements would be made to allow servicemen to vote at the polls that might be established for the civilian employees, if it were not convenient for them to get to a service poll. That would be a matter of framing the regulations.

Q. That would have to be done by proxy from most of those embassies, would it not?—A. We have no system of proxy voting now except in the case of prisoners of war. It is a personal vote, as Mr. Dickey has just explained.

Mr. HOLLINGWORTH: Mr. Chairman, I feel that Mr. Dickey's observation as to the general law, as he called it, was quite in order, but I should like Mr.

Castonguay to answer this question, if he can. If a Canadian serviceman marries a German girl, does she automatically become a Canadian citizen?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: I am not competent to give a ruling with respect to the Canadian Citizenship Act.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think that much is to be gained in that regard. We could probably find out.

Mr. HOLLINGWORTH: Probably a German wife of a Canadian serviceman would not be familiar at all with Canadian politics.

Mr. CHURCHILL: What is the average term of service abroad of Canadian servicemen?

The WITNESS: Usually the term is three years, if he is accompanied by his wife.

By Mr. Hansell:

Q. Might I ask if these figures are recent figures? How would they compare, for instance, with figures of the last election two years ago? Are they approximately the same?—A. The figures would be very much higher now, Mr. Chairman. It is only in the last two years that we have commenced to move dependents abroad in any numbers. It was necessary to construct married quarters, and so on, for them, and that has just been done. It is just in the last year that they have been living abroad in large numbers.

Q. Has there been any particular agitation or request from wives of these men? Where does the idea spring from, really, of granting this to them? Does it come from the department? Do they want it?—A. Mr. Chairman, the matter has not yet come up, because there has not been a general election since there has been any substantial number of wives living abroad. Therefore, we have had no representations, regarding the matter, from the wives or their husbands. I could fairly say that it is an idea developed in the department. It seemed only reasonable to extend this privilege to them.

Mr. POULIOT: You have no power of attorney from the wives of soldiers to request that the franchise be extended to them?

The WITNESS: No, I could not fairly say that we have.

Mr. RICHARD (*Ottawa East*): In the same camps now—and this has only been for the past few years—you have teachers and other civilian employees who are, of course, not wives of the soldiers. They are there for two or three years and maybe more. Has any consideration been given to extending the vote to those teachers and other people who are with your camps?

The WITNESS: Mr. Chairman, we have very few Canadian civilian employees abroad. We have a large number of civilian employees who are nationals of the countries in which the camps are situated. We have some 112 civilian schoolteachers, and we would very much like to see the Act so amended as to make it possible for them to exercise their franchise in a general election. We would hope that, if the proposal put forward by the Department of External Affairs is adopted, it would be modified to include these civilian schoolteachers.

Mr. FRASER (*Peterborough*): Those civilian schoolteachers are paid by the Department of National Defence, are they?

The WITNESS: They are actually paid by their own Canadian school boards who, in turn, are reimbursed by the Department of National Defence, so that possibly they would not come under a general provision applying only to Canadian government employees. Special consideration would have to be given to their case in drafting new legislation.

Mr. MACDOUGALL: What is the status of exchange teachers abroad?

The WITNESS: I take it that the reference is to teachers going abroad from Canada to teach in English schools, and that sort of thing. I am afraid that I have no information on that.

Mr. PALLETT: Of these 3,613 wives that you mentioned, how many of their marriages were completed in Canada and how many overseas?

The WITNESS: I have no figures on that. The very great majority of marriages would have taken place in Canada.

Mr. HANSELL: Might I ask Mr. Castonguay a question? This again raises the matter of the residential status of these wives. After the wives have gone overseas, what is their residential status? Who would they vote for?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: It would depend on the decision of the committee. It could be that the committee would wish to have the wives apply their votes to the constituency to which their husbands made a declaration. That could be one approach to the matter. The question of where that vote would be applied would have to be determined by the committee. The husband makes a declaration of his place of ordinary residence, and it would seem to me natural that the wife should be limited to apply her vote to that constituency. That would simplify matters a great deal.

Mr. POULIOT: In normal life, it would be the wife who informed her husband, rather than vice versa.

Mr. DICKEY: The scheme of the present regulations is for the vote to be applied to the place of ordinary residence of the service voter. I do not think that there was any suggestion that that principle should be departed from, unless there was good reason for the committee to decide otherwise. I understand that the department's view was that the place of ordinary residence of the wife would be the same as the place of ordinary residence of the husband.

Mr. HANSELL: Yes, but a little while ago Mr. Castonguay said that once a year the serviceman could declare his place of residence by reason of the fact that his wife had moved from Ontario to Alberta, as many of them do.

Mr. FRASER: (*Peterborough*): Not many.

Mr. HANSELL: In this case they would not be moving from one part of Canada to another part of Canada, but they would be moving their home from Canada to Germany.

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Then his residence would remain the same as it was on his original declaration. It is only when he moves within Canada, or when his family moves within Canada, that he has the privilege of making a change in his place of ordinary residence.

Mr. RICHARD (*Ottawa East*): Maybe Brigadier Lawson could break down his figure of 3,613 wives, and tell us where these people are located.

The WITNESS: Yes, I have a breakdown of those figures, Mr. Chairman. These are wives of service personnel living with their husbands outside of Canada. In the United Kingdom and Europe there are a total of 3,401, made up of 63 navy, 1,630 army, and 1,708 air force. In the United States there are a total of 212, made up of 46 navy, 70 army and 96 air force. I have no figures for other countries, but there would be very few beyond that. There would be only a few wives of military attaches, as I said, and perhaps one or two members of their staffs in various places.

By Mr. Fraser (*Peterborough*):

Q. Most of those in the United States would be in New York and Washington, would they not?—A. No, I would not say that. They would be scattered.

Q. Would they be scattered where the training is carried on?—A. Yes.

By Mr. Pouliot:

Q. In the first place, I would suggest that the witness sit down to answer. He spoke of a certain number of wives in Europe. Europe is a continent, and I wonder if he could give details for each European country.—A. I am sorry, Mr. Chairman. I have not exact figures on that. The largest number would be in Germany, because that is where our brigade is stationed. The wives of all the members of the brigade would be in Germany. Approximately one-half of our air division is in Germany, so that the wives of one-half of the air division would be in Germany. The other half of the air division is in France, and therefore those wives would be in France. Outside of Germany and France, the numbers would be comparatively small. There would be a fairly substantial number in the United Kingdom, but beyond that there would be very few.

Q. The smaller the number, the more difficult it would be to organize? —A. That is quite true, Mr. Chairman, but, of course, we do not provide facilities for them all. As I said before, there will be some for whom it would not be reasonable for us to establish facilities.

Q. To summarize the whole thing, you did not receive any representations from any soldier stationed overseas, nor from a wife of any such soldier, to appear before the committee and to ask that the franchise be extended to them?—A. No, we had no such request.

Mr. PALLETT: I have a question for Mr. Castonguay. Do you know the percentage of overseas members of the armed forces who voted in the last election?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: In the United Kingdom and northwest Europe there was a potential vote of 9,224. That was the estimated number of Canadian forces electors; of these, 5,104 voted. In Japan and Korea there was an estimated number of Canadian forces electors of 9,340; of these, 3,873 voted.

Mr. POULIOT: That is for men and women in the forces?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Members of the Canadian forces. 5,104 voted out of 9,224, which would be slightly under 60 per cent. In Japan and Korea the figure would be about one-third of the forces.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions of this witness? If there are no questions, can I release the witness before we go into general discussion?

Agreed.

Thank you very much, Brigadier Lawson, for coming here this morning and presenting your case, and thanks also to your assistant, Captain Dewis. Is it the wish of the committee that we proceed now to a discussion of this matter?

Mr. RICHARD (*Ottawa East*): Unless there are other representations from other witnesses, I think that, to proceed in a reasonable manner, we should hear from the Chief Electoral Officer. After hearing these witnesses, perhaps he could give us his opinion as to whether there are any mechanics within the Act as it now stands which would be reasonably apt to be applied to these circumstances. Then, I think, we could go into a general discussion.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that agreed?

Agreed.

Mr. N. J. Castonguay, Chief Electoral Officer, called:

The WITNESS: I explained at the second meeting the position with regard to taking the votes of Canadian citizens who are not wives of members of the Canadian forces or public servants abroad. In my explanation I pointed out

that I think it would take a complete change in our electoral system to provide facilities for Canadian citizens who are not members of the public service or wives of members of the forces to vote outside the country. I went beyond that. I think that it would also take a complete change to provide facilities for Canadian citizens who are absent from their polling divisions within Canada to vote at a general election. Dealing with this question of Canadian citizens who are not public servants nor wives of members of the Canadian forces, I have nothing to add to what I said at the original meeting and to what I have briefly outlined now.

With regard to members of the public service, if the committee wish to confine these facilities for the public service to the voting territories that I am authorized to establish for members of the Canadian forces, I am sure that it can be done, but I do not presume that the committee would wish me to establish a voting territory solely to cover the public servants in, say, South America or in Asia. There are limitations to the facilities that we can provide with the voting territories that we have established by law. We have those three in Canada and at the last general election, as you know, I had one in Japan and Korea, and one in the United Kingdom and northwest Europe. There are limitations even to the territories I do establish outside the country. Those members of the Canadian forces who are in countries that can be serviced from the voting territories outside the country are taken care of now, but these facilities are limited.

Before going on to the wives, I must say that this could be done if it were limited to members of the public service and if some rules could be devised to establish a place of ordinary residence for them in this country so that they could apply their votes outside the country to the constituency where they have normal residence when not absent. As to the wives of members of Canadian forces, in so far as the mechanics are concerned, I think that that could be arranged with less difficulty than with the public service.

MR. FRASER (*Peterborough*): Would it not have to be done by proxy, as from the embassies? Is that not the only way it could be handled?

THE WITNESS: No, as I explained previously, with the permanent system of lists you can establish facilities to provide for a postal vote. With most of those countries where facilities are provided to nationals to vote outside the country, the basis for those facilities is a permanent electoral roll. If the elector is absent from his home polling division within the country, he will go to another polling station in the country and apply a vote in the poll for a candidate in his constituency. The mechanics are different for a national living outside the country. He applies to the registrar of his constituency for a postal ballot, and that ballot is sent to him, provided he is enrolled on that permanent list of the constituency. Then it is up to the elector to send that postal ballot back to the registrar of his constituency in time to be counted, and the normal safeguards are the checking of the signature of the elector on the postal envelope against the elector's original application for registration and then checking the poll book where the elector would normally vote to see if somebody had voted in his name. I would suggest that, even in the providing of these facilities in Canada, the province of British Columbia allows three weeks for the collection of their absentee votes. For a federal election, spread from Newfoundland to British Columbia, the returning officers would need about six or seven weeks to get these votes back to their proper constituencies and counted. Therefore you would have a period of at least two months before members could take their seats in the House.

By Mr. Pouliot:

Q. What delay would there be when they ask for a form in the first place?

—A. The form is requested as soon as the election is announced, but the form

cannot be sent to the elector until such time as nomination takes place because with the postal envelopes and ballots must be sent the names of the candidates in the pertinent constituency.

Q. That is if there is a permanent list. If there is no permanent list, it is not feasible.—A. Then it is not practicable at all.

Q. Is it true that a permanent list is purely Utopian?—A. I know that it was tried once, in 1934.

Q. At the time when Mr. Bennett was in power, Mr. Thompson was working with your father.—A. A franchise Act was introduced in 1934. Colonel Thompson became the franchise commissioner. The basis of that system was a complete enumeration in October, 1934. There was to be an annual revision, and the annual revision took place between the 15th May and the 30th June, 1935. After that revision ended, on the 30th June, there was no way to get on or off that list, and in the rural areas there was no vouching system. Your name had to be on the list to vote. The election was announced in October, about four months after the last opportunity was afforded to any citizen to get on the list. The experience of that election was such that the members came back after the 1935 general election and unanimously agreed to reject that permanent list. That is the one experience that we have had in this country with a permanent list.

Q. It was not very good.—A. The onus of recording any change with the registrar rested upon the elector. He had to go before the registrar and to inform him that he had moved into the constituency and that he wanted to be on the list. The onus, in a practical sense, of removing the names from the lists fell upon the political organization in the constituency, because the elector, having left, was no longer interested in having his name struck off. I understand that striking off names from the lists became more or less a task of the political organizations in the constituencies. By that I do not mean to infer that the permanent system of lists cannot be properly used. It is used in other Commonwealth countries and used successfully. To provide facilities for people absent within the country or outside the country, the basis of such a system has to be a permanent list, in order to provide the normal safeguards that only ballots cast by qualified electors of a constituency are counted in that constituency, even though they are absent from their polling division on polling day.

Mr. FRASER (*Peterborough*): In regard to the postal ballot, in many cases it could not be secret. If a ballot came in from some outlandish section of the community and there was only one person in that section, they would know, when that ballot was counted, how that individual voted.

The WITNESS: I would say that the postal ballot is secret, because in the first place in the case of absence within a country that vote must be cast in a polling station. The elector walks into a polling station and states, for instance, "I am from Peterborough". He gets a ballot and gives his name. Then he has a list of candidates, and he writes the name of the candidate on the ballot. He puts the ballot in the envelope and drops it into the ballot box of that polling station. But there is a danger in regard to secrecy outside the country inasmuch as the voter does not drop it in a ballot box at a polling station. He receives it at his home, and maybe somebody will come along who says to the elector, "Mark the ballot for such a candidate, put it in the envelope, and I'll mail it for you". That cannot happen when they cast their ballots in a polling station. Outside the country, an elector can mark his ballot at home or in his office or anywhere, and that type of influence could be exercised. That is the only danger with regard to secrecy. When it gets back to the returning officer, I do not see any danger with regard to secrecy, because the ballots are counted in front of the agents. They are removed from the envelopes without identifying the envelopes with

the ballots, and I think that there is protection of the secrecy of the ballot, in the same measure as there is for voting under the armed forces voting regulations.

By Mr. Pouliot:

Q. After consultation with Mr. Churchill, I should like to ask you a question regarding the permanent list. You said that perhaps it was successful in other countries?—A. Yes.

Q. Do you not think that it could have been successful because it was not honestly done in those countries?

MR. CHURCHILL: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Chairman. There has been no consultation between myself and Mr. Pouliot. Mr. Pouliot used the word "honestly", and I suggest that the word "honestly" should be struck out.

MR. POULIOT: When I use a fine word like that, it is not libel or slander.

THE CHAIRMAN: Today being March 17, could we display some of the spirit of St. Patrick?

MR. HOLLINGWORTH: I move that this committee approve in principle that the federal vote be extended to government personnel resident outside Canada and also to the wives of service personnel where facilities are now available. The reason why I so move, Mr. Chairman, is this: I think that it is trite to say that every Canadian citizen has an unassailable right to vote. I think it would be bad if we denied that vote to any Canadian citizen. I do not see that any great additional cost would be incurred, because I said specifically, "where present facilities are available". I think that we should approve it in principle only at this stage, because the technical working out of the actual voting procedure will have to be done after further consultation with the Chief Electoral Officer, possibly at a subsequent meeting. Therefore I move, Mr. Chairman, that we so extend the vote as I have indicated in the resolution.

MR. RICHARD (*Ottawa East*): Seconded.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Hollingworth and seconded by Mr. Richard that the committee approve in principle the extending of the franchise to the wives of members of the armed forces and to civil servants living abroad.

MR. ELLIS: I would approve of that motion, because I think that we should extend the vote to as many Canadian citizens as possible. At the same time I would suggest that when we speak of extending voting privileges to people living in other parts of the world, we should bear in mind that there are many people in Canada who cannot vote. If we are going to be concerned about Canadians living in other countries who cannot vote, we should remember that in Canada there are hundreds of thousands of Canadians who are denied the vote, simply because their jobs take them into other parts of Canada. That principle has involved many members who come to Ottawa and lose the votes in their municipal and provincial elections. In this country we find that in elections at every level there are a great many Canadians who are denied votes. The ideal situation would be absentee voting, which would make it possible for all Canadians to vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: That could be dealt with under another section of the Act. Your point, which is well taken, could be considered under another section of the Act.

MR. ELLIS: I just bring up that point as the reason for my attitude on this subject.

MR. MACDOUGALL: I should like you to read the motion of Mr. Hollingworth, because it seems to me, if I was hearing correctly, that there is ambiguity in the motion. Would you mind reading it again?

The CLERK (*Mr. Chassé*): The hon. member will correct me if I have it wrong, but this is how my notes read: Mr. Hollingworth moves, seconded by Mr. Richard: "that this committee approve in principle the extension of the facilities now existing for servicemen abroad for the taking of their vote, to government employees and wives of soldiers living abroad.

The CHAIRMAN: Wives of the members of the armed forces.

Mr. HOLLINGWORTH: With the rider: "where present facilities are available".

Mr. MACDOUGALL: I say that this is getting very mixed up. As far as I personally am concerned—and I think that this is the opinion of other members of the committee—we are justified under the armed services voting regulations to allow the wives of members of the armed services abroad to vote. But that is an entirely different matter to what is linked up with the resolution of Mr. Hollingworth. That resolution includes not only the wives of the members of the armed services abroad but governmental employees also. Now, I am going to move an amendment, and I do not want anyone to think that I am discriminating at all against an organization of which I am very much in favour, the Department of External Affairs. I think that it is doing a great job. But the very moment that we give due cognizance and authority for the enactment of such legislation, you have not the foggiest idea of the number of people who are or were Canadians and who now may be voting in the United Kingdom as British subjects. Secondly, you have no idea how many ex-Canadians are resident in the United States and are now going through a process, possibly, of taking their American citizenship papers. The question of absentee voting was mentioned by the hon. member for Regina. Since I have become a member of parliament I have never been able to vote in the municipal elections of the city of Vancouver. Do not forget that there are all types of occupations which will not allow a legitimate Canadian elector to cast his ballot because he has been prevented, either by his location or through illness or some other cause, from being in that part of the dominion, so that he loses his franchise to vote in his own electoral district. The question was raised the other day by the hon. member for Temiscouata regarding civilians who are not governmental employees. There are many big mining organizations which are staffed by Canadians in many countries of the world. There are also the Canadian Pacific and the Canadian National Railways, and there are all the banks in Canada which have Canadian personnel, a great many of whom have been absent from this country for a period of 10 years or more. I doubt very much whether people in that category can cast anything resembling an intelligent vote, and I doubt whether they are desirous of voting at all. Therefore I move this amendment to the motion of my good friend from York Centre: That every consideration be given by this committee to the suggestion that the wives of members of the armed services abroad should be allowed to vote, but that we do indefinitely reject the idea that that same principle should be extended to Canadians who are living abroad and are not in the armed services.

Mr. CAVERS: Seconded.

Mr. ZAPLITNY: I had hoped that the amendment was going to be briefer than it was. I am not sure what the words of the amendment are, but I take it that the meaning of the amendment is that we should now deal exclusively with the question of extending the franchise to the wives of services personnel and leave the other question.

Mr. MACDOUGALL: I want to dispose of one negatively and the other positively.

Mr. ZAPLITNY: I suggest that that kind of motion would be out of order, because it would be a negative motion. Speaking to the motion, as I understood the meaning of it, it was that we deal first with the question of the

wives of the armed services personnel, and then dispose of the other question later. On that basis, I thoroughly support the amendment. I think that Mr. MacDougall's point is very well taken in that we are dealing in the first instance with a special case for which facilities are already available and which would not require any extensive changes to the Act or regulations, whereas the other question is a matter which involves a different principle entirely.

Mr. MACDOUGALL: Mr. Zaplitny, with your permission, I would cut my amendment. I will admit that it is possibly out of order, because there is a negative and a positive side to it. I shall now move an amendment to the original motion: that this committee do consider giving the wives of Canadian service personnel who are serving abroad the vote. Is that short enough?

Mr. ZAPLITNY: That is the kind of motion that I would be pleased to support. I think that there is a very good case for us to deal with that matter first. I am in favour of the amendment, and I am in favour of leaving the other question of the public servants till a later time.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you agree with that, Mr. Cavers?

Mr. FRASER (*Peterborough*): Before that amendment is put, Mr. MacDougall, I think that you would have to add in that amendment, "to the wives of servicemen who are qualified to vote".

The CHAIRMAN: I think that that would be automatic.

Mr. FRASER (*Peterborough*): I do not know whether it would be.

Mr. MACDOUGALL: I will qualify it, if you like.

Mr. DICKEY: I think that this is only an expression of the approval of the committee in principle.

Mr. FRASER (*Peterborough*): In principle, yes, but I think it should be qualified.

Mr. HOLLINGWORTH: I have no objection to Mr. MacDougall's amendment, because actually that is part of my motion.

Mr. MACDOUGALL: But it is not all of it.

Mr. CHURCHILL: I should like to speak on the amendment. There is much to be said for extending the voting privilege to the wives of servicemen overseas, but I would hope that some different arrangements would be made if that is to be done with respect to the services vote generally. Although there is everything to be said for servicemen voting, there is a very strict limitation in presenting to servicemen the privilege of voting in matters that concern the election in which they are casting their ballot. I have been through this voting twice overseas, and once at home, while in the service, and I appreciate the lack of knowledge of service people with regard to the issues at stake. If we are going to extend now this privilege to wives of servicemen without making it possible to give the wives at least further information than the servicemen get with regard to the issues at stake, I think that we are not gaining very much.

The CHAIRMAN: May I interrupt for a moment? When the regulations come before the committee, that could be dealt with.

Mr. CHURCHILL: I know, but I would not be in favour of voting for this amendment if the intent of it is simply to carry on the system now in existence.

The CHAIRMAN: I think that we are dealing more with the principle of it now.

Mr. HANSELL: Might I rise to a point of order here? I should like to make a suggestion. There may be confusion between the motion and the amendment. I am quite prepared to vote for Mr. MacDougall's amendment,

but I believe that it could be simplified if both gentlemen would withdraw their motions and make two separate motions, one approving the principle with regard to the wives of servicemen, which would dispose of that question, and the other approving or rejecting the question with regard to the public servants abroad. That would simplify the matter very much, I think.

Mr. DICKEY: On that point of order, I was also going to bring that to the attention of the committee that, if by voting for this amendment we negative the other portion of Mr. Hollingworth's motion, we in effect are deciding at this stage to rule out the possibility of further consideration of the proposal in connection with the public servants. I for one do not think that I should like to make a definite decision on that at the moment. I think that there should be further discussion on it. If Mr. MacDougall and Mr. Hollingworth would separate the issues, so that we could deal with the issue on which there seems to be general unanimity and then at a later meeting have further discussion to decide separately the other problem, I think it would be much better.

Mr. POULIOT: I shall resuscitate my motion to postpone the whole matter indefinitely, for this very good reason: from what Mr. Castonguay has said, the suggestion to give the franchise to civilians outside Canada is impracticable. That is my point of view. In the second place, I have every sympathy for the wives of members of the armed forces overseas, but they have asked for nothing. It would be a burden imposed on them by the House of Commons. They have never asked for it. Here we are kind-heartedly saying that we will give the franchise to those women, some of whom know nothing about Canada. The Brigadier told us that he had no power of attorney to speak on their behalf. He was not asked either by the wives or the husbands to ask for it, and here we are very enthusiastically doing this for the welfare of the wife of the Canadian soldier. Let us come down to common sense, and let us not exaggerate the thing. I have wasted two hours here this morning with this discussion.

Mr. MACDOUGALL: Not wasted.

Mr. POULIOT: Not when you members of the committee spoke, but we are doing nothing here. We are discussing a too impractical matter. We have wasted two hours. Is that not enough? I have moved that the matter should be postponed indefinitely and that we start work on practical matters that may be useful, not sentimental ones like this that will get us nowhere.

The CHAIRMAN: We have a motion and an amendment before the committee.

Mr. POULIOT: You have my first motion. I have not withdrawn it. It is the senior one and has precedence.

The CHAIRMAN: Has it any seconder?

Mr. HOLLINGWORTH: I think that his motion is out of order, although I think his comments are in order. With the concurrence of the seconder of my motion and with the general concurrence of the committee, I shall withdraw my motion, and Mr. MacDougall has apparently consented also to withdraw his amendment. I shall permit him to make his motion. I shall then make a separate motion, and then Mr. Pouliot can follow me.

Mr. POULIOT: But both motions have been withdrawn, and I have not withdrawn mine.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Pouliot made the original motion. In order to bring matters to a head, we can deal with Mr. Pouliot's now. Those in favour of Mr. Pouliot's motion that we postpone the matter indefinitely? Against? I declare the motion lost.

Mr. MacDougall, do you wish to make a motion?

Mr. MACDOUGALL: I certainly wish to confirm the amendment, which now becomes the motion, having to do with the wives of service personnel abroad.

Mr. DICKEY: The wording of Mr. MacDougall's motion would be that this committee approve in principle the extension of the franchise under the Canadian Forces Voting Regulations to wives of servicemen stationed abroad.

Mr. MACDOUGALL: That is it.

Mr. CHURCHILL: I do not think that we should make a snap vote on this now. I move that we now adjourn.

Mr. PALLETT: If the motion for adjournment is not now going to be entertained, I believe that we have the right to discuss the motion.

The CHAIRMAN: The motion to adjourn is not debatable, and I am going to put the motion that we adjourn. There are other reasons. I do not bring this out very emphatically, but we have only one reporter here this morning and he has been here since 10.30, and, as you know, it is quite a strain. However, I will put the motion. Is the committee ready to adjourn?

Agreed.

We will meet again at the call of the chair.

The committee adjourned.

